

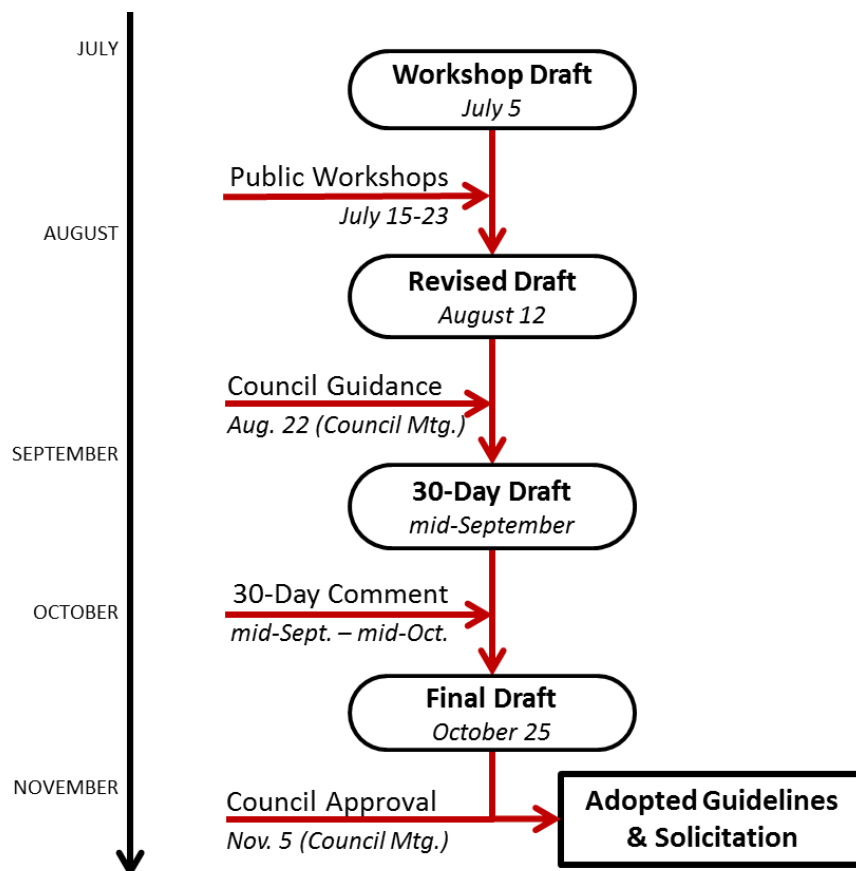
## Workshop Draft of the 2013 Update to the Program Guidelines of the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant & Incentives Program

Enclosed is the *Workshop Draft* of the updated Program Guidelines for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program. The release of this draft initiates a multi-stage public process that will provide critical input to help the Strategic Growth Council shape the future of this program. This *Workshop Draft* is intended to be consistent with the Investment Principles and Recommendations for Priority Investments described in the 2013 Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds Investment Plan.

This document can be downloaded from the SGC website at [http://sgc.ca.gov/planning\\_grants.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/planning_grants.html).

Pursuant to Public Resources Code §75127-75128, the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) manages the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program. In the first two rounds of this program the Council awarded a total of more than \$50 million to cities, counties and regional agencies to conduct planning activities that will foster sustainable communities, lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and achieve other sustainability objectives.

The Department of Conservation (DOC), Division of Land & Resource Protection administers this grant program on behalf of the SGC. Per the Council's direction, SGC staff and DOC staff are leading a public process to update the Program Guidelines. This *Workshop Draft* is the first step in that process, which is expected to proceed as diagrammed below:



As depicted in the timeline to the left, this *Workshop Draft* will be the subject of a round of four public workshops that will be hosted in mid-July. Exact dates, times, and locations of these workshops are posted at [sgc.ca.gov/planning\\_grants.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/planning_grants.html). Alternatively, you may submit comments by email to [grantguidelines@sgc.ca.gov](mailto:grantguidelines@sgc.ca.gov) until 5:00 PM on Friday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The feedback gathered at these workshops and through these comments will influence a *Revised Draft* of the Program Guidelines, which will be discussed at the Strategic Growth Council's public meeting on August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Those familiar with previous version of the Program Guidelines will notice that this *Workshop Draft* represents significant changes to how applications are evaluated. The following bullet points summarize the intent and rationale behind these changes. SGC and DOC staff look forward to hearing your feedback regarding whether the *Workshop Draft* indeed fulfills these goals.

- **Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions “Bang per Buck”**

Climate change is among the most pressing problems facing California, and a principal goal of this grant program is to fund the development and implementation of plans that lead to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Thus, the *Workshop Draft* Program Guidelines strongly prioritize proposals that are likely to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions; relative to the size, scope, and cost of the work program. This is reflected in the Focus Areas, the Threshold Requirements, and the scoring criteria.

- **Measuring Progress with Indicators**

By measuring the work program’s progress toward sustainability objectives, performance indicators help local stakeholders, grantees, and grant administrators understand and track the value and benefits of the work program. Thus, the *Workshop Draft* Program Guidelines require that proposals include actionable, meaningful, and valuable indicators that are based on reliable and consistent quantifiable or qualitative data and information.

- **Pushing Toward Implementation**

Plans funded by this grant program only realize their promised value if they are ultimately implemented by the appropriate local authority. Thus, the *Workshop Draft* Program Guidelines focus funding toward proposals that have a very high likelihood of near-term implementation or are themselves the implementation of other plans. This is reflected in the Focus Areas, the Threshold Requirements, and the scoring criteria. This is also reflected in the technical assistance provided to grantees, which is intended to help grantees build capacity to promote their continued success.

- **Focused, Locally-Identified Priorities**

This grant program has always recognized twelve Program Objectives that represent the Strategic Growth Council’s broad view of sustainability. However, sometimes the activities that most significantly increase sustainability in local communities do so by only focusing—but truly focusing—on a smaller number of objectives. To allow for these types of activities, the *Workshop Draft* Program Guidelines score proposals in a way that allows applicants to self-select a set of Primary Objectives (from the list of twelve Program Objectives) by which they will measure the success of their work program.

- **More Holistic Measure of Need**

This program has always prioritized funding for the communities most in need, but the concept of “need” is too complex to be adequately represented by a single indicator such as household income. Thus, the *Workshop Draft* Program Guidelines adopt the more holistic *CalEnviroScreen* methodology to identify Environmental Justice Communities. The *Workshop Draft* includes a set-aside for proposals that specifically serve these communities and meet other criteria, and scoring criteria are established to ensure that these proposals can be competitive in the general pool of proposals.

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES  
PLANNING GRANT AND INCENTIVES PROGRAM**

**GRANT GUIDELINES & APPLICATION**

**FUNDED BY**

**THE SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD  
CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION BOND ACT OF 2006**

**PROPOSITION 84, CHAPTER 9**

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL**

**WORKSHOP DRAFT**

**July 5, 2013**

**GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO SOLICITATION**

The Strategic Growth Council is hosting four public workshops in July 2013 to discuss these *Workshop Draft* Program Guidelines. Times, dates, and locations of the public workshops are posted online at [http://sgc.ca.gov/planning\\_grants.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/planning_grants.html).

Alternatively, you may submit comments by email to  
**grantguidelines@sgc.ca.gov**.

All comments heard at the workshops or received before  
**5:00 PM on Friday, July 26th, 2013**  
will be considered when creating the next draft  
of the guidelines document.

Please be as specific as possible when providing written comments  
(e.g. cite page numbers, provide suggested language, etc.).



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## I. Introduction

The Strategic Growth Council requests submittal of proposals for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentives Program.

### Fund Source and Statutory Authority

The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant is funded by Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006. It added Division 43 to the Public Resources Code, Chapter 9, Sustainable Communities and Climate Change Reduction Section 75065(a), authorizing the Legislature to appropriate \$90 million for planning grants and planning incentives that achieve sustainability objectives (*see Appendix I for the text of Proposition 84*). SB 732 Steinberg, (Chapter 13, Statutes of 2008) established the Strategic Growth Council (Council) and added Sections 75127 and 75128, which direct the Council to manage and award financial assistance to support the planning and development of sustainable communities that achieve sustainability objectives. Additionally, Section 75126 states that these funded activities must be consistent with the state's planning priorities and must reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Section 75125 states that the Council shall develop guidelines for awarding financial assistance, including criteria for eligibility and additional consideration.

### Eligible Applicants

Cities, counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs), Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), Councils of Governments (COGs), or combinations thereof are eligible to apply. Eligible lead applicants vary by Focus Area.

### Grant Application and Administration

The Department of Conservation administers this grant program on behalf of the Strategic Growth Council. For more information about the administrative process, see Section XIII.

Grant applications are submitted via the online FFAST submittal tool, which provides specific prompts to which applicants must respond. For more information about the online application, see Appendix C.

### Purpose and Goal

This grant program is meant to foster the development of sustainable communities throughout California. It is designed to help local governments meet the challenges of adopting land use plans and integrating strategies in order to transform communities and create long term prosperity. Sustainable communities shall promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment and promote healthy, safe communities.

The principal goal of this grant program is to fund the development and implementation of plans that lead to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in a manner consistent with the State Planning Priorities (as defined by Government Code Section 65041.1) and consistent with the current Environmental Goals and Policy Report, if available. Further, funded activities are intended to achieve the following Program Objectives:

- Improve air and water quality
- Promote public health
- Promote equity
- Increase housing affordability
- Increase infill and compact development
- Revitalize urban and community centers
- Protect natural resources and agricultural lands
- Reduce automobile usage and fuel consumption
- Improve infrastructure systems
- Promote water conservation
- Promote energy efficiency and conservation
- Strengthen the economy

## II. Threshold Requirements

Proposals must meet the Threshold Requirements below. Proposals that do not meet the following criteria will **not** be considered eligible for funding. This shall be at the sole discretion of the State. Section XI, Step 1 lists the questions asked of applicants that are the basis for evaluating satisfaction of the Threshold Requirements.

1. Be consistent with (*see Appendix A, Glossary*) the State's Planning Priorities, in summary below, and identified in Section 65041.1 of the Government Code (*Appendix M*):
  - Promote infill development and invest in existing communities;
  - Protect, preserve and enhance environmental and agricultural lands and natural and recreational resources; and
  - Encourage location- and resource-efficient new development.
2. Reduce, on as permanent a basis as is feasible, greenhouse gas emissions consistent with:
  - California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 38500) of the Health and Safety Code) and any applicable regional plan (*see Appendix A, Glossary*).
3. Connect regional planning and local plans through collaboration.
  - Any proposal from a city or county must demonstrate how its work program is consistent with its region's goals and plans, including approved or adopted Regional Transportation Plans / Sustainable Communities Strategies; and
  - Any proposal from a regional agency must demonstrate, through collaboration with local governments, that local implementation of the proposed activities can be reasonably expected to follow from the work program.
4. Use State of California best practices for climate change vulnerability assessment, resilience planning, and adaptation to the effects of climate change on the proposed project. (*See Appendix K*).
5. Include a minimum ten percent (10%) local match. At least five percent (5%) of the requested grant amount must be a cash match; the balance may be in-kind. This requirement is waived for a proposal that qualifies for the Environmental Justice set-aside (*see Section V*).

## III. Application Limits

The minimum grant amount for a single award is \$50,000. The maximum grant amount for a single award is \$500,000, unless the application is a joint proposal (*see Appendix A, Glossary*), in which case the maximum grant amount for a single award is \$1 million.

An organization may only submit one proposal to this grant program per funding cycle unless one proposal is eligible for the Environmental Justice set-aside, in which case the organization may also submit an application for the primary funding pool.

## IV. Focus Areas

The Council will fund proposals that fall within the following three Focus Areas:

- Focus Area #1: Innovative Incentives for Sustainable Development Implementation
- Focus Area #2: Sustainable Community Planning in Transit Priority Planning Areas
- Focus Area #3: Collaborative Community Planning in Preparation for High Speed Rail

Each proposal must apply to exactly one of the above Focus Areas, and these are described in more detail on the following pages. There is no specific weighting of funding among the three Focus Areas: the ratio of grant funds awarded to each Focus Area will depend on the number and quality of proposals received for each Focus Area.

### **Focus Area #1: Innovative Incentives for Sustainable Development Implementation**

**Eligible Lead Applicants:** Cities, Counties, MPOs, RTPAs, JPAs and COGs

**Intent:** This Focus Area supports planning activities that implement an adopted or pending general plan or element in a way that incentivizes sustainable, infill development. Proposals should present innovative implementation activities that reduce GHG emissions, that go beyond the applicant's typical planning activities, and that are capable of replication in other jurisdictions.

**Examples of Eligible Proposals:** (including, but not limited to)

- Nexus Studies for Fee Reduction Programs in Infill Areas
- Design Guidelines for Higher Density Mixed Use Development
- Modifications of Parking Requirements in Infill and Transit-rich Areas
- Zoning Code Updates and Amendments Promoting Infill and Affordable Development
- Circulation Element Update to Incorporate Healthy Community Policies and Objectives
- Affordable Housing Preservation Strategies in Infill and Transit Oriented Areas
- Financing Strategies for Sustainable Development and Related Infrastructure
- Priority Conservation Plans and Policy Development
- General Plan or Specific Plan Updates that incorporate infill goals to meet CEQA streamlining opportunities related to SB 226
- Other innovative local incentive implementation strategies that will reduce GHG emissions and meet Program Objectives

### **Focus Area #2: Sustainable Community Planning in Transit Priority Planning Areas**

**Eligible Lead Applicants:** Cities and Counties

**Intent:** This Focus Area supports sustainable community planning in transit priority planning areas as identified by a proposed or adopted Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy.

**Examples of Eligible Proposals:** (including, but not limited to)

- Multimodal or Transit Station Area Plans
- Corridor Plans Linking Transit Oriented Development
- Zoning and Development Standards to Support Transit Oriented Development
- Financial Feasibility Analyses/Highest and Best Use studies to support a mix of uses surrounding transit
- Approaches to supporting sustainable infrastructure, such as water, sewer, drainage
- Other sustainable community planning and implementation activity within transit priority planning areas

### **Focus Area #3: Collaborative Community Planning in Preparation for High Speed Rail**

**Eligible Lead Applicants:** Cities, Counties, MPOs, RTPAs, JPAs and COGs.

**Intent:** This Focus Area supports collaborative activities across multiple jurisdictions to plan their communities for the opportunities provided by High Speed Rail. This Focus Area prioritizes proposals within regions that are linked to the Initial Operating Section of California High Speed Rail (defined in their 2012 Business Plan as “extending from Merced south through Bakersfield and Palmdale to the San Fernando Valley”). Jurisdictions within these regions submitting proposals to this Focus Area need to demonstrate how their projects will incorporate sustainable practices while managing accelerated development demands and enhancing economic benefits resulting from operation of high speed rail service. Activities funded in this Focus Area will go beyond—but should be complementary to—the planning and environmental mitigation that will be conducted in association with the construction of the High Speed Rail line.

**Proposal Examples:** (including, but not limited to)

- Multi-Modal Transportation Plans
- Specific Plans or Zoning Amendments to Increase Densities, Affordability and Promote a Compact Mix of Uses
- Regional Economic & Fiscal Analyses
- Habitat, Conservation, and Working Lands Preservation Plans
- Other planning and implementation activities that prepare communities for a sustainable future connected with High Speed Rail

## **V. Environmental Justice Set-Aside**

Twenty-five percent (25%) of the funding cycle shall be set aside for proposals that include and specifically benefit Environmental Justice communities, which are defined as those communities that receive the top ten percent (10%) of statewide scores using the CalEnviroScreen methodology. A proposal is only eligible for the Environmental Justice set-aside if it meets Threshold Requirements #1 through #4 and it meets all of the following conditions:

- a. Lead applicant must be a city or a county;
- b. Proposed plan area must include all or part of at least one community that receives a score in the top ten percent (10%) of statewide scores using the CalEnviroScreen methodology (*see Section XI, Step 1.5 for further explanation*); and
- c. Proposal must specifically target and directly benefit those communities identified in (b).

Section XI, Step 1.5 lists the questions asked of applicants that are the basis for evaluating eligibility for the Environmental Justice set-aside.

Proposals that apply to the Environmental Justice set-aside must still apply to any one of the three Focus Areas. The local match Threshold Requirement and “leveraging additional resources” points are waived for proposals that are eligible for the Environmental Justice set-aside.

An organization can typically only submit one proposal to this grant program per funding cycle. However, if one proposal is eligible for the Environmental Justice set-aside, the organization may also submit an application for the primary funding pool.

If there are not enough proposals eligible for the Environmental Justice set-aside to account for 25% of the funding available for that funding round, the remainder of the set-aside funds will return to the primary funding pool.



## **VI. Program Objectives**

This program is intended to fund proposals that achieve a variety of the objectives listed below.

- Improve air and water quality
- Promote public health
- Promote equity
- Increase housing affordability
- Promote infill and compact development
- Revitalize urban and community centers
- Protect natural resources and agricultural lands
- Reduce automobile usage and fuel consumption
- Improve infrastructure systems
- Promote water conservation
- Promote energy efficiency and conservation
- Strengthen the economy

Scores for Program Objectives will be based on the aggregate impact of the work program on these objectives. Applicants may select no more than three of these objectives as “Primary Objectives,” must explain how these Primary Objectives will be met through the grant activities, and must identify reportable indicators that will be used to measure the progress toward that objective. Additionally, applicants must explain which of the following objectives are “co-benefits” that will result from the work toward their Primary Objectives. Section XI, Step 2 lists the questions asked of applicants that are the basis for evaluating and scoring these Program Objectives.

## **VII. Priority Considerations**

Consistent with the goal of the program, the following areas have been identified as priorities in awarding grants.

- Proposal demonstrates ongoing collaboration with state, regional and local, federal, public and private stakeholders and community involvement;
- Proposal demonstrates strategies or outcomes that can serve as best practices for communities across the state or region;
- Proposal is leveraged with additional resources; and
- Proposal serves an Environmental Justice Community.

Section XI, Step 3 lists the questions asked of applicants that are the basis for evaluating and scoring these Priority Considerations.

## VIII. Scoring Criteria

All information submitted in the application package provides the grant review committee tools for evaluation and should demonstrate how effectively the proposal meets Threshold Requirements, Program Objectives, Focus Area intent, and Priority Considerations. Proposals will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility. Eligible proposals will be scored by a grant review committee whose members represent the breadth of the Strategic Growth Council. Proposals will be scored on the following areas; each area is awarded points on a sliding scale from zero to the listed number. See the Evaluation Questions (Section XI)

### SCORING CRITERIA

#### Program Goals, Objectives, and Focus Area (60 points)

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| ➤ Potential for substantial reduction in greenhouse gas emissions relative to the size and scope of the work program  | 15 |
| ➤ Extent to which work program achieves Primary Objectives (no more than three of the twelve Program Objectives)  | 15 |
| ➤ Extent to which work program achieves additional co-benefits (self-selected subset of the twelve Program Objectives)  | 8  |
| ➤ Extent to which work program achieves the intent of the applicable Focus Area   | 12 |
| ➤ Extent to which proposal includes clear, reportable measures of progress toward achievement of Primary Objectives and the intent of the applicable Focus Area | 10 |

#### Priority Considerations (20 points)

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| ➤ Extent to which proposal demonstrates ongoing collaboration with state, regional and local, public and private stakeholders and community involvement | 8  |
| ➤ Extent to which work program results in strategies or outcomes that can serve as best practices   | 7  |
| ➤ Extent to which proposal is leveraged with additional resources (beyond the threshold local match)  | 5* |

#### Organizational Capacity (20 points)

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| ➤ Organization demonstrates the ability to complete the work program within schedule and budget | 10 |
| ➤ Organization demonstrates readiness and capacity to implement proposed plans                  | 10 |

**Total Available Points 100**

\* *This criterion is waived for a proposal that qualifies for the Environmental Justice set-aside, and these five points are automatically awarded to a proposal that qualifies for the set-aside.*

## IX. About the Online Application

- The application uses an online application tool (FAAST) (see Appendix C). You will be prompted to type information into text boxes, select choices from preset lists, and submit attachments (upload).
- We suggest that you sign up for and explore the FAAST system before beginning work on your application. Then prepare answers in an unformatted text document for editing. Finally, cut and paste information into the online application and ensure that your content is displaying correctly and no responses are truncated.
- When working in the online application, you can save work-in-progress at any point, and you can then return to your application at another time. Be sure to save your work often.
- Use only basic formatting. Extra symbols or layout designs can interfere with completion of the online application.

## X. Proposal Summary Statement

The Proposal Summary Statement should be **no longer than one full page**. You will need to attach (upload) this document to the online application. The summary should describe:

- How this work program promotes sustainable communities and facilitates the reduction of GHG emissions;
- How the work program achieves the intent of the applicable Focus Area;
- How the work program achieves the applicable Primary Objectives; and
- How the work program will measure progress toward achieving the intent of the applicable Focus Area.

## XI. Evaluation Questions

The questions below are designed to solicit specific facts regarding how the proposal addresses the Threshold Eligibility Requirements, Program Objectives and Priority Considerations. Use these questions to prepare your draft proposal prior to entry into the online application.

### **Step 1: Threshold Requirements**

Clearly address all of the following prompts:

1. Describe how the work program is consistent with the State's Planning Priorities, Section 65041.1 of the Government Code, including how it accomplishes all of the following:
  - a. Promotes infill development and invests in existing communities;
  - b. Protects, preserves and enhances environmental and agricultural lands, and natural and recreational resources;
  - c. Encourages location- and resource-efficient development.
2. Describe how the work program will reduce, on as permanent a basis as is feasible, greenhouse gas emissions consistent with California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 and any applicable regional plan. These responses will be the basis for awarding up to fifteen points for "substantial reduction in greenhouse gas emissions" (*see Section VIII, Scoring Criteria*).
  - a. How will the work program reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
  - b. How significant are the resulting greenhouse gas emission reductions in relation to the emissions within the applicant's jurisdiction? In relation to the emissions statewide?
  - c. Cite any applicable regional plan(s).
  - d. Describe how your work program will be consistent with the greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies in the applicable regional plan(s).
3. Connect state policies or programs, regional planning and local plans through coordination and collaboration.
  - a. If the primary applicant is a city or county, how is the work program consistent with the region's goals and planning documents, including any approved, adopted, or proposed Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy? A letter from the regional agency concurring with the explanation is one way to satisfy this requirement.
  - b. If the primary applicant is a regional agency, what local action or implementation can be reasonably expected to follow from this work program? How are you working with cities and counties to ensure local support for the work program? A letter from the implementing local agency concurring that it has the capacity and intent to realize the resulting plan is one way to satisfy this requirement.

4. Describe how the proposal uses State of California best practices for climate change vulnerability assessment, resilience planning, and adaptation to the effects of climate change on the proposed project (*see Appendix K*).
  - a. Identify the potential climate change impacts to the population or natural systems most vulnerable to those impacts within the planning area.
  - b. How does the work program use best practices to address adaptation to these impacts?
5. Include a minimum ten percent (10%) local match. At least five percent (5%) of the requested grant amount must be a cash match; the balance may be in-kind. This requirement is waived for a proposal that qualifies for the Environmental Justice set-aside.
  - a. In your Initial Budget Proposal (*see Appendix D*), identify funding sources and amount already committed to the work program and expected timing of funds. Detail whether funds are in the form of cash contributions, in-kind services, volunteer effort, donated labor or materials, technical expertise, etc.

Leveraging additional resources above and beyond the minimum local match requirement will be considered in awarding up to five points for “leveraged additional resources” (*Section VIII, Scoring Criteria*). To be eligible for these five points, also answer the following three questions:

- b. Citing your Initial Budget Proposal, what resources does your proposal leverage beyond the minimum local match requirement?
- c. How do these additional resources increase the impact and value of the proposed work program?
- d. How do these additional resources demonstrate the organization’s commitment to the proposed work program?

### **Step 1.5: Environmental Justice Set-Aside**

If applying for the Environmental Justice set-aside, provide the following documentation and responses to the following three Environmental Justice set-aside criteria:

- a. Lead applicant must be a city or a county.
  - i. Is the lead applicant a city or a county (yes/no)?
- b. Proposed plan area must include all or part of at least one community that receives a score in the top ten percent (10%) of statewide scores using the CalEnviroScreen methodology.
  - i. Create a PDF “printout” from the online CalEnviroScreen map viewer (<http://tinyurl.com/enviroscreen>) that displays the proposed plan area and upload it to the online application tool. Explain what part of the proposed plan area overlaps the high-scoring communities indicated on the map.
- c. Proposal must specifically target and directly benefit those communities identified in (b).
  - i. Describe the distinctive challenges faced by the Environmental Justice Communities that this proposal seeks to serve. This may include referencing the specific CalEnviroScreen indicators that result in the community’s high score (these can be found by clicking on the community in the online CalEnviroScreen maps, <http://tinyurl.com/enviroscreen>).
  - ii. How will this proposal specifically work to address these challenges and improve the quality of life for residents in the Environmental Justice community?
  - iii. Discuss how the Environmental Justice community has been and will continue to be engaged in the development of the proposal and the execution of the work program.

For more information about CalEnviroScreen and its methodology, see <http://oehha.ca.gov/ej/ces042313.html>.

Note that if a proposal applies for the Environmental Justice set-aside but is deemed by the grant review committee to not meet the requirements of the set-aside, the proposal will be considered in the primary funding pool if and only if it meets the local match Threshold Requirement.

## **Step 2: Program Goals, Objectives, and Focus Area**

Clearly address all of the following prompts:

1. *Potential for substantial reduction in greenhouse gas emissions relative to the size and scope of the work program. (15 points)*  
Points for this program goal will be based on the response to the evaluation questions for Threshold Requirement #2.
2. *Extent to which work program achieves Primary Objectives. (15 points)*  
Identify no more than three of the twelve Program Objectives (see Section VI) that are the proposal's Primary Objectives. For each of the proposal's Primary Objectives, answer the following questions:
  - a. How will the proposed work program achieve the objective?
  - b. What strategies will be used to ensure that the proposed work program meets the objective?
3. *Extent to which work program achieves additional co-benefits. (8 points)*  
Identify an additional subset of the twelve Program Objectives (see Section VI) that are co-benefits of the proposal. These are important positive outcomes that will result from the proposed program of work, but that are neither the primary rationale for the proposal nor the primary measure of the proposal's success. For the set of co-benefits, answer the following questions:
  - a. How will the proposed work program achieve these co-benefits?
  - b. What strategies will be used to maximize these co-benefits?
  - c. For any Program Objectives that are neither identified as Primary Objectives nor co-benefits, describe the negative or neutral impact the proposed work program will have on those objectives.
4. *Extent to which work program achieves the intent of the applicable Focus Area. (12 points)*
  - a. Review the "intent" of the applicable Focus Area as described in Section IV of this document. How does the proposed work program achieve this intent?
5. *Extent to which proposal includes clear, reportable measures of progress toward achievement of Primary Objectives and the intent of the applicable Focus Area. (10 points)*
  - a. For each Primary Objective, how will you measure progress toward achieving that objective?
  - b. What reliable and consistent quantifiable or qualitative data and information, and standardized measurement methods are incorporated into your measurements? Describe the methods, data, relevant facts and evidence used.
  - c. How will these measurements be used to track the progress of your work program, integrate meaning and value to your process, and generate action toward your project goals?

## **Step 3: Priority Considerations**

Address the following points, if applicable to the proposal:

1. Does the proposal demonstrate ongoing collaboration with state, regional and local, federal, public and private stakeholders and community involvement? (8 points)
  - a. What innovative partnerships have you developed to prepare this proposal, and how will those partners contribute to and support or implement the program of work? Partners may include organizations such as local governments, regional agencies, state agencies, federal agencies, tribal governments, special districts, educational institutions, nonprofits, and private stakeholders.
  - b. In your Initial Work Plan, describe tasks undertaken by all entities.
  - c. Describe the purpose and extent of stakeholder and public engagement opportunities that will be provided by your proposed program of work. Will these engagement opportunities target specific groups or populations, and how?

2. Does the proposal demonstrate strategies or outcomes that can serve as best practices for communities across the state? (7 points) *Note: Funded proposals and final work products may be posted on the Strategic Growth Council website.*
  - a. Does the proposal include tools or processes that could easily be accessed and used by other government agencies to develop plans or strategies for sustainable communities?
  - b. How will your agency promote and share the work program's information, tools or processes?
3. Proposal is leveraged with additional resources. Points for this Priority Consideration will be based on the response to the evaluation questions for Threshold Requirement #5. (5 points)

#### **Step 4: Organizational Capacity**

Answer the following questions regarding capacity to carry out the terms of the grant (10 points):

1. What is your organization's experience in completing this type of proposal or similar proposals? Is the expertise needed for the successful development of the proposal available within the organization? If not, how do you plan to acquire it or build capacity within the organization? Please specifically note all SGC grants your organization has applied for and, if your organization received a grant, please briefly describe the current implementation status of the plan.
2. Do you have active partners that will help execute the work program? Who? How will they help?
3. How will the work program build capacity within the organization during and beyond the term of the grant?
4. How will the work program be kept on schedule and within budget?
5. If the work program goes over budget, what is your contingency plan to cover the cost?

Additionally, answer the following questions regarding capacity to implement the funded plan after the grant period (10 points):

6. Beyond the proposed planning activities to be funded by this grant, what additional steps will be necessary for implementation, and who is responsible for managing the implementation? What other organizations are necessarily involved in accomplishing these steps?
7. How have departments and decision-makers within your organization demonstrated that it is willing, ready, and able to implement the plan?

## **XII. Ineligible Proposals**

Ineligible proposals that will not be funded under this program include, but are not limited to, proposals that:

- Do not meet the Threshold Requirements
- Do not contain adequate documentation and applicable materials
- Do not include objective(s) and indicator(s)
- Do not meet the intent of the Focus Area for which they are applying
- Are not received by the application deadline
- Request funding for the development of CEQA documents
- Request funding for the same proposal under another Focus Area
- Request funding for activities already funded by any other grant program (no double-dipping)

### **XIII. Grant Administration**

#### **Grant Selection Process**

1. Applicants submit a complete grant proposal to the State by the deadline.
2. Proposals are reviewed for completeness and eligibility. (Incomplete or ineligible proposals may not be evaluated or considered for funding at the sole discretion of the State.)
3. Grant Committee (Committee) reviews proposals and makes recommendations for awards.
4. Strategic Growth Council approves the final proposals for awards.

#### **General Overview of Grant Process after Grants are Awarded**

1. State sends grant agreement and materials to grantee.
  2. Grantee signs and returns all required copies back to the State (a fully executed copy will be returned to the Grantee). Upon the date of signature of the grant agreement, signed by both parties, the grantee has 36 months to complete work program.
  3. Grantee commences work and submits requests for reimbursements, as applicable.
  4. Periodic progress reports, at least two annually, are submitted and reviewed.
  5. Grantee completes work program and submits proposal completion packet (to be provided under separate cover).
  6. Grantee participates in ongoing technical assistance, best practices workshops, and reporting meetings that support the overall work plan.
  7. State receives proposal completion packet (including final report) and approves final payment.
  8. Grant activities may be audited during the performance period and for three years after the grant is completed.
- \* Awards are contingent upon legislative appropriation of funds and sale of bond.

#### **Changes to Approved Proposal**

A grantee wishing to make changes or amendments to an approved proposal must first obtain approval from the State. Changes in the proposal must continue to meet the requirements of the grant as approved including its goals, objectives, and tasks. The grantee jeopardizes funding if changes are made without State approval.

#### **Eligible Costs**

Direct related costs, including staff to implement the work program, incurred during the performance period specified in the grant agreement will be eligible for reimbursement. All eligible costs must be supported by appropriate documentation. Costs incurred outside of the performance period and indirect costs are not eligible (*see Appendix A, Glossary*).

#### **Payment of Grant Funds**

Funds cannot be disbursed until there is a fully executed grant agreement between the State and the Grantee. Work done prior to a fully executed grant agreement will not be funded.

- Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis (i.e., the grantee pays for services or staff and is then reimbursed by the State).
- Fifteen percent (15%) of the amounts submitted for reimbursement will be withheld and issued as a final payment upon work program completion, at the sole discretion of the State.
- Advanced payments are not allowed.

## **Cancellation of Grants**

The Department of Conservation retains its discretion to cancel grant agreements, as a last resort, for failure to comply with the terms of the executed agreement. The following are examples of actions that may result in a Grantee's loss of funding. This is not a complete list:

- Grantee fails to obtain a Grant Agreement.
- Grantee withdraws from the grant program.
- Grantee fails to complete the funded work program.
- Grantee fails to complete a work program that meets the requirements agreed upon.
- Grantee fails to submit all documentation within the time periods specified in the grant agreement.
- Grantee changes scope of work program without approval of the State.
- Grantee changes the sub-recipient or entity(s) identified in the work plan or application without approval from the State.

## **State Audit and Accounting Requirements**

### **Audit Requirements**

Funded proposals are subject to audit by the State of California. If the award is selected for audit, advance notice will be given. The audit shall include all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the grantee, as they relate to the work program for which the funds were granted.

The grantee must have the work program records, including the source documents and evidence of payment, readily available, and provide an employee with knowledge of the project to assist the auditor. The grantee must provide a copy of any document, paper, record, or the like, requested by the auditor.

The Department of Conservation will provide an initial guidance document outlining acceptable documentation.

### **Accounting Requirements**

The grantee must maintain an accounting system that:

- Accurately reflects fiscal transactions, with the necessary controls and safeguards.
- Provides a good audit trail, including original source documents such as purchase orders, receipts, progress payments, invoices, time cards, canceled checks, etc.
- Provides accounting data so the total cost of each individual proposal can be readily determined.

### **Records Retention**

Grant records must be retained for a period of three (3) years after final payment is made by the State. All grant records must be retained by the grantee at least one (1) year following an audit. Grantees are required to keep source documents for all expenditures related to each grant for at least three (3) years following work program completion and one year following an audit. A work program is considered complete upon receipt of final grant payment from the State.



## APPENDIX A – GLOSSARY

The terms used in these grant guidelines have the following meanings:

**AB 32 (Chapter 488, 2006):** the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 establishes a comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases. It codifies in the Health and Safety Code declarations about the serious threats posed by global warming and the intent of the Legislature to ensure coordination among state agencies and all affected stakeholders in the development of regulations to implement this law.

**Applicant:** an eligible organization requesting funding from this program to be administered by the State. Eligible applicants include cities, counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs), Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), Council of Governments (COGs), or a combination.

**Bond or Bond Act:** Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006. *See Appendix I*

**Catalyst Project:** a Gold, Silver or Bronze level project designated under the Department of Housing and Community Development's California Catalyst Projects for Sustainable Communities Pilot Program.

**Consistent With:** compatible with, not contradictory to, or in agreement with.

**Council:** Strategic Growth Council established pursuant to SB 732 (Steinberg, Chapter 13, Statutes of 2008).

**Direct Costs:** Costs incurred during the performance period specified in the grant agreement, including salary and benefits for staff, to implement the proposed work program. Direct costs are eligible for reimbursement. *See Indirect Costs* for further clarification.

**Environmental Justice Community:** Communities that receive the top ten percent (10%) of statewide scores using the CalEnviroScreen methodology. These can be identified through the online CalEnviroScreen map viewer (<http://tinyurl.com/enviroscreen>).

**Equity:** A region which demonstrates equity is a competitive and inclusive region in which members of all racial, ethnic, and income groups have opportunities to live and work in all parts of the region, have access to living wage jobs and are included in the mainstream of regional life. It is also one in which all neighborhoods are supported to be vibrant places with choices for affordable housing, good schools, access to open space, decent transit that connects people to jobs, and healthy and sustainable environments.

**Fund or Funds:** monies authorized from the Proposition 84 Bond Act of 2006

**Grant Administrator:** an employee of the State who manages the grants.

**Grant Agreement:** a contractual arrangement between the State and grantee specifying the payment of funds by the State for the execution of the work program by the grantee.

**Grant Performance Period:** the beginning and ending dates of the Grant Agreement. Eligible costs incurred during this period may be funded from the grant. No work plan should exceed 36 months.

**Grantee:** an applicant that has a signed agreement for grant funding with the State.

**Greenhouse Gases:** include, but are not limited to, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydro fluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

**Healthy Community:** *See Appendix M for a detailed description*

**Implementation of a General Plan:** an action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out general plan policy and relies primarily upon regulations, such as specific plans, the zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinances, and public project consistency requirements. Each general plan policy must have at least one corresponding implementation measure. Examples of implementation measures: (1) the city shall use tax-increment financing to pay the costs of replacing old sidewalks in the redevelopment area. (2) The city shall adopt a specific plan for the industrial park. (3) Areas designated by the land use element for agriculture shall be placed in the agricultural zone.

**Indirect/Overhead Costs:** expenses of doing business that are of a general nature and are incurred to benefit two or more functions within an organization. These costs are not usually identified specifically with a grant, grant agreement, plan or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Examples of indirect costs include salaries and benefits of employees not directly assigned to the work program; functions such as personnel, business services, information technology, and salaries of supervisors and managers; and overhead such as rent, utilities, supplies, etc.

**Infrastructure:** may include but is not limited to: transportation modes including walking and biking; housing supply or affordability; energy generation or transmission; water supply or conveyance; water treatment; trees or other vegetation; parks, open space and other public spaces; solid waste systems; liquid waste systems; or communications systems such as broadband access.

**Joint Proposal:** an application submitted by one lead applicant with one or more eligible partner entities located adjacent to, or within, the lead applicant's jurisdiction. A single budget must be submitted by the lead applicant. Budget must describe the funds that will be distributed to partners and identify general activities for which they are used.

**Natural Resources:** the materials and functions that comprise the natural wealth of an area's ecosystems, including, but not limited to the plants, animals, minerals, air, water, and soil. Among these functions are watershed catchment, wildlife migration and habitation, forestry, grazing, and crop production. Of particular importance for complex, large scale natural resources functions are lands that flood, lands that are farmed, lands dedicated to open space, lands designated for mineral extraction, greenbelts, parks and trails, and lands valued for their aesthetics.

**Objective:** a high level focus or approach to achieve sustainable communities requirements and priorities. This allows flexibility for an entity to focus on issues that are important to its community and have the most beneficial results. For example, to address the requirement to conserve water, one entity may want to focus on reduction of commercial water usage because a larger percentage of its water is used by that sector. Another entity may want to focus on reduction of outdoor residential water usage because it would result in significant water savings.

**Proposition 84:** - See “Bond”

**Regional Plan:** either of the following: 1) A long-range transportation plan developed pursuant to Section 134(g) of Title 23 of the United States Code and any applicable state requirements, OR 2) A regional blueprint plan, which is a regional plan that implements statutory requirements intended to foster comprehensive planning as defined in Section 65041.1 of, Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 65080) of Division 1 of title 7 of, and Article 10.6 (commencing with Section 65580) of Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code.

**Revitalize Urban Areas and Community Centers:** for the purpose of this grant program, the rejuvenation and promotion of reinvestment in a district of a city, county or community, usually typified by a concentration of uses including residential, retail and commercial buildings, and public spaces.

**Specific Plan:** a tool for implementing the general plan but is not part a General Plan. A specific plan can combine policy statements with development regulations (§65450, et seq.). It is often used to address the development requirements for a single project such as urban infill or a planned community. Its emphasis is on specific standards and development criteria. A specific plan may be adopted either by resolution or by ordinance. Specific plans must be consistent with all facets of the General Plan.

**State:** the Strategic Growth Council or its representative.

**Sub-recipient:** an entity that will participate in the proposed work program submitted by the applicant. Sub-recipients must be included in the work plan and budget form. The lead applicant submits invoices on behalf of the sub-recipient. The State pays the lead applicant, who then pays the sub-recipient.

## **APPENDIX B – APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

### **(What to include)**

The online application tool will require uploading certain attachments in the PDF format. (Contact the State at [SGCSustainablecommunities@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:SGCSustainablecommunities@conservation.ca.gov), or phone (916) 322-3439, if you are unable to save files in the PDF format.) Do not submit additional materials that have not been specifically requested.

Note: Incomplete applications may not be evaluated or considered for funding at the sole discretion of the State.

The online application tool will request all of the following information, either as attached (uploaded) PDF files, or as text entered into the online questionnaire.

- ☐ **1. Completed Application Form** (Online FFAST application)
- ☐ **2. Proposal Summary Statement** (Upload PDF described in Section XIII)
- ☐ **3. Proposal Description** (Described in Section IX, entered into Online FFAST application)
- 4. Supporting Documentation**
  - ☐ **a. Budget** (Template at [http://sgc.ca.gov/planning\\_application\\_forms.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/planning_application_forms.html))
  - ☐ **b. Work Plan** (Template at [http://sgc.ca.gov/planning\\_application\\_forms.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/planning_application_forms.html))
  - ☐ **c. Indicators** (Template at [http://sgc.ca.gov/planning\\_application\\_forms.html](http://sgc.ca.gov/planning_application_forms.html))
- ☐ **5. Signed Resolution from Governing Body** (Required Language in Appendix G)
- ☐ **6. Environmental Justice Set-Aside Documentation**, if applicable

## OTHER APPENDICES

*The following appendices will also be included in the Program Guidelines document:*

### **Appendix C – Online Application Tool: FAAST**

Hyperlink to online application; tips regarding online application; screenshots of online application

### **Appendix D – Sample Initial Budget Proposal**

New sample Initial Budget Proposal

### **Appendix E – Sample Initial Work Plan**

New sample Initial Work Plan

### **Appendix F – Indicators & Measuring Progress**

Resources for measuring progress toward sustainability objectives and example indicators

### **Appendix G – Resources for Effective Public Engagement**

Collection of resources (or link to online collection of resources) regarding effective public engagement

### **Appendix H – Required Resolution Language**

Sample language for the resolution required to be signed by the applicant's governing body

### **Appendix I – Proposition 84, Chapter 9**

Text of *Chapter 9, Sustainable Communities and Climate Change Reduction* of Proposition 84 (2006)

### **Appendix J – Public Resources Code, Division 43, Chapter 13**

Text of Public Resources Code Sections 75120-75130

### **Appendix K – Climate Adaptation Resources for Local Government**

Collection of State resources (or link to online collection of State resources) regarding local government actions for climate adaptation, including best practices

### **Appendix L – State Planning Priorities**

Text of Government Code Section 65041.1

### **Appendix M – Healthy Communities Framework**

Text of the Healthy Communities Framework, developed by the CA Health in All Policies Task Force

### **Appendix N – Online Resources**

List of and links to relevant State resources, plans, and guidance